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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. THORNBERRY).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
March 13, 2003.

I hereby appoint the Honorable MAC THORNBERRY to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer:

Lord of history and Conqueror of evil, empower us to surrender completely to Your spirit. With renewed faith in Your guidance, even in the midst of conflicting inspirations, we commend to You the Members of Congress, the President, his Cabinet, and all who struggle to lead Your people and acknowledge Your sovereignty over all events and times.

When faced with impending decisions or making a deep commitment, Your devout people not only turn to You in prayer but they use every ounce of intelligence and every source of consultation to know Your holy will. Lord, human as we are, often we talk to You as we would a friend or an intimate, wondering what is Your mind.

At a certain moment, we begin to look for signs from You that will confirm the movement in our heart. Lord, send forth Your light that we may discern well the desolations or consolations You give us. If conscience is flooded with anger, resentment, and darkness, we will reexamine their source. If, however, You fill us with a surge of energy borne of inner peace

and freedom, that takes us beyond our ego and is in tune with Your word, we will continue to seek to do Your will now and forever.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain five 1-minutes on each side.

BAN PARTIAL-BIRTH ABORTION

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, today, our colleagues on the other side of the building will vote on a bill banning the barbaric procedure of partial-birth abortion. Partial-birth abortion is one of the most violent and gruesome acts known to mankind.

Despite what its supporters say, several thousand times a year in the United States healthy babies and

healthy mothers in the fifth and sixth months of pregnancy undergo this horrific procedure. As we seek to lead the world against tyranny and in support of basic human rights, we must recommit ourselves to promoting the basic human rights of the most vulnerable among us, the most innocent and defenseless members of the human race. We have a chance to stand up for what is right, to stand against what is wrong. We have a chance to defend those who need it most, to stand against those who seek to harm them.

Partial-birth abortion is not rare, partial-birth abortion is not safe, partial-birth abortion does not foster a respect for human life. It degrades us all. Partial-birth abortion must be banned. Let us pass the bill.

THE CRISIS WITH IRAQ

(Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island. Mr. Speaker, I voted for the resolution authorizing the forcible disarmament of Iraq, and I continue to agree with the President of the United States that we should disarm Iraq by force, if necessary, in order to protect American lives. But I also recognize that if we go to war right now, the war will have little legitimacy in the eyes of the world community, and that increases the risks. I, therefore, believe that it is in our security interests to support Great Britain's latest proposal to establish specific unambiguous disarmament benchmarks and a firm deadline. Failure to comply with all requirements would trigger military action without further debate.

If Iraq does comply, we would have achieved our aims without the need for war, everybody's first choice. If Iraq again fails to meet its obligations, our

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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